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Latest news from AME

£32m Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering appoints first director

Coventry University and Unipart have appointed a director for the recently established Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering (AME), located at Unipart's Foleshill site in Coventry.

Carl Perrin will head up the new institute, which will be welcoming its first cohort of undergraduate and postgraduate students in September this year.

The £32 million initiative is set to pioneer a new higher education model for manufacturing engineering degrees, offering a blend of innovative activity-led teaching, product development and research to create a unique learning environment.

Its aim is to develop the next generation of highly skilled, specialist engineers and operational leaders by providing up to 40 students every year with direct access to Unipart's operations, allowing them to work on 'live' issues in a real world manufacturing production environment.

Research and testing carried out in partnership between the University and Unipart is intended to stimulate new product and process development, boosting innovation in both the regional and national economy.

Carl, who is a Chartered Engineer and Fellow of the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, is moving from Rolls-Royce where he was Head of Technology at a joint venture based in Nottingham.

Here he was instrumental in the introduction of new coating technology and manufacturing processes for the latest generation of Trent engines.

Previously, the former graduate of Sheffield University was R&D director at Dana Glacier Vandervell and responsible for delivering several powertrain projects for Formula 1 teams.

It is expected that Carl's experience of engineering and manufacturing across both automotive and aerospace sectors will fuel the innovative approach to teaching on

the frontline of industry and in delivering new business opportunities for the advanced research centre.

Carl Perrin, who takes up his role as institute director on April 28th, said:

“I am delighted to be joining this innovative new institute at an exciting time as we bring in our first group of students and prepare for our first commercial research projects.

“Coventry and the surrounding area has a history of leading edge manufacturing and engineering and we will look to build on that heritage by providing highly skilled engineers who are industry ready, both for Unipart and for businesses in the Midlands and beyond.”

Carol Burke, Managing Director of Unipart Manufacturing Group, explained:

“We are delighted to welcome Carl to this unique initiative and look forward to him driving the Institute to be at the forefront of cutting edge research and development.

“He will provide the necessary leadership to drive a learning facility that will develop young people at a faster rate, using a hands-on approach in a challenging technical environment.

“Not only will the new institute address the national skills shortage, but by placing the best and brightest young engineers with Unipart’s skilled industry specialists, we will also accelerate the development of new technologies across a range of industrial sectors.”

John Latham, acting vice-chancellor of Coventry University, concluded:

“I would like to congratulate Carl on his appointment as director of the institute. He has considerable experience in the sector having previously delivered new advanced technology for Rolls-Royce, and this will bring great benefits to the students and to R&D activities.

“It will be a different model for developing engineering talent and we are confident that bringing the teaching and research environment on to the factory floor will generate a unique experience for students and fresh thinking for industry.”

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Notes to editors

About the Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering (AME)

The Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering is a £32m project led by Coventry University and the Unipart Group.

It will create an international centre of engineering and manufacturing excellence, which will be the base for a sustained programme of innovative teaching, learning, product development and research activity.

Accommodating new undergraduate, postgraduate and low carbon R&D programmes; the facility will create a 'faculty on the factory floor', allowing students the opportunity to be connected directly to the latest technology, engineers and 'live projects' on the Unipart shop floor.

The aim is to develop the next generation of highly skilled, specialist engineers and operational leaders needed for the UK's high-value manufacturing sector.

The Institute for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering has received £7.9m funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England's Catalyst Fund. Unipart is contributing £17.9m towards the creation of the state-of-the-art manufacturing facility and a further £5.6m towards student scholarships and product R&D.

About Coventry University

Coventry University is a forward-looking modern university whose roots can be traced back to 1843 to the Coventry School of Design. With a proud tradition as a provider of high quality education and a focus on multidisciplinary research, the University has established a robust academic presence regionally, nationally and across the world.

Through its links with leading-edge organisations and its longstanding culture of business support, the institution has earned a strong reputation for enterprise and innovation which sees it work with more SMEs each year than any other University, and helped it to secure the Times Higher Education 'Entrepreneurial University of the Year' award in 2011.

The University's city centre campus is continually developing and evolving, and a £100 million-plus investment in a new student centre, engineering and computing building and science facility is playing a key role in modernising the entire learning experience.

About The Unipart Group

The Unipart Group employs around 10,000 people worldwide and has an annual turnover of more than £1billion. It is a leading UK manufacturer, full service logistics provider and consultant in operational excellence.

Operating across a range of market sectors, including automotive, manufacturing, mobile telecoms, rail, retail and technology, Unipart offers a breadth of services from third party logistics to expert consultancy.

Unipart Manufacturing Group provides a complete manufacturing and logistics solution to Tier 1 automotive and wider industry.

All Unipart sites operate according to the Group's proprietary version of Lean known as The Unipart Way. This is a philosophy of working underpinned by tools and techniques that inspires efficiency, flexibility and outstanding customer service in any process.

The company, which is based in Oxford in the UK, has a growing number of international sites supporting a wide range of blue chip clients. For more information visit: www.unipart.com